

1. (Twice amended) In a round baler for bailing harvested crops and having a baling chamber surrounded by a two-part housing of which a front part is rigidly connected to a frame of the baler while a rear part is in the form of a pivotal tailgate, the improvement comprising an actuating mechanism having a plurality of belts and rollers disposed adjacent one another within the baling chamber for enabling baling chamber size to vary when pivoted, and a tensioning arm provided with guide rollers and a pivotal arm, wherein the tensioning arm is operatively engageable with a latching mechanism on a frontal part of the housing and means for increasing a latching force on the latching mechanism as a bale in the baling chamber increases in size.

3. (Twice amended) A round baler according to Claim 5, wherein the actuating mechanism includes a plurality of mutually interlinked belts.

4. (Twice amended) A round baler according to Claim 5, wherein a fixed stop is arranged on the tailgate below the second arm of the bell crank.

5. (Twice amended) In a round baler for baling harvested crops and having a baling chamber surrounded by a two-part housing of which a front part is rigidly connected to a frame of the baler while a rear part is in the form of a pivotal tailgate, the improvement comprising: an actuating mechanism having a plurality of belts and rollers disposed adjacent one another within the baling chamber for enabling baling chamber size to vary when pivoted, and a tensioning arm provided with guide rollers and a pivotal arm, wherein the tensioning arm is pivotally mounted on the frame of the baler via a hydraulic cylinder arranged between the pivotal arm and a first arm of a bell crank, wherein the first end of a bell crank is pivotally mounted on a side wall of the baler's tailgate, and wherein a second arm of the bell crank is operatively engageable with a latching mechanism on a frontal part of the housing, means for increasing a latching force on the latching mechanism as a bale in the baling chamber increases in size, and including a tension spring arranged between the pivotal arm and a fixed mounting point on the frame of the baler.

6. (Twice Amended) In a round baler for baling harvested crops and having a baling chamber surrounded by a two-part housing of which a front part is rigidly connected to a frame of the baler while a rear part is in the form of a pivotal tailgate, the improvement comprising an actuating mechanism having a plurality of circulating flat-type belts and pressure rollers disposed adjacent one another within a peripheral region of the baling chamber for enabling baling chamber size to vary when pivoted, and a tensioning arm provided with guide rollers and a pivotal arm, wherein the tensioning arm is pivotally mounted on the frame of the baler via a hydraulic cylinder arranged between the pivotal arm and a first arm of a bell crank, wherein the first end of the bell crank is pivotally mounted on a side wall of the baler's tailgate, wherein a second arm of the bell crank is connected to a latch which is engageable with a keeper disposed on the frontal part of the housing, and resilient means for increasing a latching force on the keeper as a bale in the baling chamber increases in size.

8. (Amended) A round baler according to Claim 6, wherein the actuating mechanism includes a plurality of mutually interlinked belts.

9. (Amended) A round baler according to Claim 6, wherein a fixed stop is arranged on the tailgate below the second arm of the bell crank.

10. (Cancelled)

11. (Twice amended) A method for baling harvested crops utilizing a round baler having a baling chamber surrounded by a two-part housing of which a front part is rigidly connected to a frame of the baler while a rear part is in the form of a pivotal tailgate, the method comprising:

pivoting an actuating mechanism having a plurality of belts and rollers disposed adjacent to one another within the baling chamber to vary baling chamber size;

pivotally mounting a tensioning arm, having guide rollers and a pivotal arm, on the frame of the baler via a hydraulic cylinder arranged between the pivotal arm and a first arm of a bell crank;

interconnecting a latch with a second arm of the bell crank;

engaging a keeper with the latch to lock the two-part housing in a closed position; and

increasing a latching force between the latch and keeper as the size of the bale increases.

12. (Twice Amended) The method according to Claim 11, including the steps of:

pivotally mounting a bell crank on a side wall of the baler's tailgate; and

selectively engaging an arm of the bell crank with a frontal part of the housing via the latch.

13. (Amended) The method according to Claim 11, including providing a plurality of mutually interlinked belts to form part of the actuating mechanism.

15. (Twice amended) The method according to Claim 12, including arranging a fixed stop adjacent the bell crank for engagement when releasing the latch and opening the pivotal tailgate.

16. (Cancelled)

17. (New) A round baler according to Claim 5, wherein the latching mechanism includes a latch and a keeper.